Tourism Destination Visioning

Here are a few simple rules to follow for a visioning exercise:

When visioning, develop a checklist that includes the following components:

- Nature of the destination and tourism's role.

- People who will participate in tourism at the destination. Who do you want to come visit your site?

- Focus on what the end result should be, and not on current problems or how it is going to happen.

- Give your vision a descriptive name - e.g. "Promoting pride and knowledge of local cultural heritage"

- Try to determine what is really important to this project/goal.

- Don't criticize! Take a chance and dream about what can be.

- Identify strengths that unite the community rather than what divides it.

- Timeline - Estimate how many years/ months it could take to make the vision a reality.

Create the "total picture". It is important to think of all the potential issues, because tourism touches so many parts of a community's life.

Do not get caught in the details. Often visioning exercises fail when groups become so enmeshed in the small details that they forget the overall goal. Be aware of the details and potential problems (e.g. write them down in a separate list), but stay focused on the big picture.

Leave room for change. Permit a certain amount of creativity. As new details emerge, allow yourself to change direction and think of new possibilities.

Listen to all views. Different stakeholders may have different visions. The job is to come up with an overarching vision representative of the total community.

Be patient when starting a community on the road to visioning. It is a difficult task to get people to think about the type of future they wish to develop and not get bogged down in personality clashes or details. Remember visions must be based in both creativity and in reality.

When doing visioning exercises with an entire community, be aware and *reach out to people* who are not able to speak in public, or are not participating because of literacy issues. Use visual tools like drawings and sketches to communicate to a larger segment of the community.